

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DER SPIEGEL INTERVIEW WITH IOANNIDES

1. THE GREEK PRESS TODAY CARRIED REPORTS AND TRANSLATIONS OF AN ARTICLE ON AN INTERVIEW APPEARING IN THE GERMAN MAGAZINE DER SPIEGEL WITH FORMER JUNTA STRONGMAN DIMITRIOS IOANNIDES FROM THE CONFINES OF HIS KORYDALLOS CELL. IN REPLIES TO QUESTIONS PUT TO HIM BY THE MAGAZINE, IOANNIDES ATTEMPTED TO JUSTIFY HIS ROLE DURING THE CYPRUS CRISIS, CLAIMED THAT HE AND THE JUNTAISTS HAD BEEN DECEIVED BY THE POLITICIANS WHO SUCCEEDED THEM, AND TRIED TO TIE THE U.S. TO THE CATASTROPHY OF THE CYPRUS INVASION.

2. ASKED ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE U.S. IN THE CYPRUS CRISIS, IOANNIDES REPLIED THAT THE GREEKS HAD RECEIVED A GREAT DEAL OF PRESSURE FROM THE U.S. BETWEEN JANUARY AND JULY 1974, PARTICULARLY FROM THE THEN U.S. AMBASSADOR IN ATHENS, HENRY TASCA. "HE WAS PRESSING US STRONGLY TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO THE TURKS, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO OIL IN THE AEGEAN. THEY (THE AMERICANS) WERE CONTINUOUSLY THREATENING US THAT IN THE EVENT OF A CLASH WITH TURKEY, WE WOULD LOSE THE ISLANDS OF THE AEGEAN. I CANNOT SAY MORE ABOUT THAT NOW."

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3. REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DER SPIEGEL WHICH REFERRED TO PRESIDENT FORD'S REMARK BLAMING THE COUP AGAINST MAKARIOS AND THE SUBSEQUENT TURKISH INVASION ON THE REGIME IN GREECE AT THAT TIME, IOANNIDES RETORTED HE ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CYPRUS SITUATION. "I HAVE NEVER DENIED MY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THAT PART WHICH BELONGS TO ME. WITH REGARD TO THE SECOND CHARGE, THE AMERICANS KNEW VERY WELL, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE 1974 NATO MEETING IN BRUSSELS THAT THE TURKS WERE GOING TO INTERVENE INTO GREEK TERRITORY (SIC) DURING THE SUMMER OF 1974. INDEPENDENTLY OF THAT, HOWEVER, THE STATEMENT BY THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT SHOWS THE DEGREE OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE REGIME OF THAT TIME FROM THE AMERICANS."

4. CONFRONTED BY CHARGES OF TIES TO THE AMERICANS, ESPECIALLY TO THE CIA, IOANNIDES REPLIED THAT THE PEOPLE "WHO MAKE UP SUCH STORIES ARE TO BE FOUND AMONG THOSE WHO ACTUALLY SERVE AMERICAN INTERESTS AND WHO, THEMSELVES, HAVE AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP, AS WELL AS AMONG THE KNOWN POLITICIANS WHO WERE ELBOWING ONE ANOTHER FOR POSITION DURING ALL THAT TIME IN THE LOBBIES OF FOREIGN EMBASSIES."

5. IOANNIDES SAID THAT WHEN THE TURKISH INVASION OF CYPRUS TOOK PLACE AND THE CRISIS WITH TURKEY REACHED ITS PEAK, THE SITUATION MOVED TOWARD A POLITICAL CHANGE AND FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY. "ALTHOUGH I DID NOT PERSONALLY AGREE WITH THE WAY THE CHANGE WAS MADE," HE ADDED, "I ANNOUNCED THAT I WOULD GO ALONG WITH THE MAJORITY OF THE OTHER MEMBERS."

6. IOANNIDES CLAIMED THAT ALL KINDS OF ASSURANCES WERE GIVEN TO GIZIKES, THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP AND HIMSELF. A RESPONSIBLE MINISTER, HE ALLEGED, ASSURED HIM THAT EXCEPT FOR A FEW TRANSFERS NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN TO ANY OFFICER. IN ANY EVENT, HE MAINTAINED, THERE IS WRITTEN EVIDENCE WHICH WILL ONE DAY COME TO LIGHT PROVING THIS FRAUD BY THE FORMER GOVERNMENT.

7. COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND, FROM A COMPARISON OF THE GREEK VERSIONS WITH THE DER SPIEGEL GERMAN TEXT, THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE GREEK NEWSPAPERS HAVE TAKEN CERTAIN LIBERTIES WITH SOME OF THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN THE INTERVIEW.
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